



CITY OF HOUSTON

Sylvester Turner

Mayor

P.O. Box 1562
Houston, Texas 77251-1562

Telephone – Dial 311
www.houstontx.gov

March 27, 2023

The Honorable Robert Nichols
Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
Texas Senate

RE: Support for SB 1663 relating to the authority of a municipality to alter speed limits

Dear Chairmen Nichols:

Transportation safety is an important issue in cities across the nation and one that is quickly getting out of our control. Texas is on the leading edge of this disturbing and deadly trend with someone dying on our state's roads every day since 2000. This is unacceptable, especially since we have the power to take reasonable measures to protect the safety of Texans.

Speed is the most direct factor in determining whether a person who is hit dies, is injured, or walks away unharmed in a pedestrian-vehicle crash. The data is clear. If a pedestrian is struck by a vehicle traveling at 20 mph, they have a much higher chance of survival than if struck by the same vehicle traveling at 30 mph.

Permitted vehicle speed for a roadway should recognize the land use context. Residential districts are a prime example of lane use where safety should be the priority over vehicle speed.

We strongly favor passage of Senate Bill 1663, authored by Senator Carol Alvarado. SB 1663 would reduce the risk to residents by allowing each municipality to opt to reduce the prima facie speed limit in residential districts to 20 mph without requiring individual investigations. This is an important step in increasing the safety of pedestrians in Houston and throughout the state.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

David Fields

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David Fields, AICP
Chief Transportation Planner

DocuSigned by:

Veronica O. Davis

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Veronica O. Davis, PE
Director, Transportation & Drainage Operations